THE
DISSEMINATOR
Nova Scotia Provincial Library
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T H E D I S S E M I N A T O R 1.3
January 21, 1994

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Elizabeth Armstrong will be acting Provincial Librarian for the period of Jan. 19-26 while Marion Pape is on vacation.

SURVEY ON BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTRES

A survey is being conducted by the organizers of the Business Information Centres. Two hundred or more groups in the province, including the Regional Libraries, will be responding to questions about the "one-stop" centres being developed. The Chiefs should receive the survey by FAX next week. Responses will be recorded electronically by a special fax machine.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR N.S. REGIONAL LIBRARIES

The Planning Team met in pleasant surroundings last Friday at the Dartmouth Regional Library and everyone agreed that the acquisition of a boardroom just like DRL's for every region should be a priority, and that snowstorms should be banned on meeting days!

The day went very well; the mood was positive, and much progress was made in preparation for the final strategic planning document. The recommendations will now be presented to the Steering Committee, and then a small Report Writing committee will be struck. Suggestions included: a business case -- proving the savings to government provided by library services -- to be

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presented to government; an affirmative action policy that reflects the composition of the community in boards and staff; the possibility of a regional technology implementation committee; and the importance of staff training, to ensure the provision of excellent public service. The final document is due out in March. Thanks to everyone who attended or sent in their comments!

DON'T TAX READING CAMPAIGN

The campaign to remove the GST from reading materials has received another shot in the arm. The Don't Tax Reading Coalition is organizing another round of letter-writing, and you are encouraged to take part, as many of you did last winter. You may remember that our previous Minister, Guy Le Blanc, also wrote a letter in support of a zero-rating on reading materials. The emphasis in the current campaign is to remind the Liberal government of their pre-election promise to remove the GST from reading materials. Previously the campaign focused on making the case for removing the tax. All of us are aware of the burden that the GST has placed on library collections budgets, and of the importance of reading to promote literacy in Canada. Our letters will make a difference. It is for good reason that the Coalition is known in Ottawa as "The lobby that won't go away". To make letter writing as easy as possible, a sample letter is found at the end of this issue of THE DISSEMINATOR. Feel free to use it or write your own!

AUTOMATION UPDATE

The database is loaded, the CD-CATSS interface works and we are now ironing out the bugs in printing labels. We hope to be utilizing the cataloguing function fully by the end of the week. We would like to thank the Regions that have notified us of problems with the database. Please continue to advise us of any irregularities, or difficulties that you encounter. We are in the process of designing and distributing a form which will make it easier for you to record problems.

There are several issues we have noticed with the database that we will be correcting as we go along. Apparently some, but not all, series are not searchable. This occurred somehow during the database walk done by ISM (Utlas) when some information was added to the field with the series statement making it not searchable.

When we get the authorities loaded and working we will be able to correct the problem. However, as with all things, the problem did not occur with all series statements, so you may get results on some searches. Another problem is that not all Talking Books have the Restricted statement in the item record. I will not try to explain why, but this too will be corrected over time.

With regard to e-mail, ILL, etc. work proceeds although slowly. Provincial Library will be sending out a copy of WordPerfect for Windows version 5.2 to those regions that do not already have it (and we hope to upgrade these to version 6.0 within the near future). WP will then be used in conjunction with PC Eudora for ILL purposes. Some scripts or macros will be developed at PL and sent to you as well. Unfortunately, there is no one package that performs equally well for e-mail, ftp, telnet, gopher and news so some different pieces of software will be acquired and made available to all. NSTN is developing this package and will be selling it to their own clients as well. More to follow in the next issue.

Many of you have asked about home access which we originally thought was included in the package. We have been discussing the options and cost with NSTN and hope to have an answer for you in the next couple of weeks.

TECHNICAL SERVICES UPDATE

Our turnaround time has seen a slight decrease in recent weeks. This is due in part to a shortage of staff in Technical Services combined with additional duties for staff members related to automation. These additional duties have been particularly pressing with the signing of the conversion phase impending. Please bear with us! Once we are fully operational on our new system, we will return to our previous glory days of turnaround time.

MultiLIS INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions for searching the OPAC will be shipped out to the regions with the next book shipment. Hopefully you will find it useful when searching the database. Any problems can be reported

to Susan Barnes or Joanne Irwin.

USER SERVICES UPDATE

Andrea John will be sending more information to all Chiefs about the proposed changes to MBS at the National Library. It seems that some sort of centralized exchange of titles is needed in Nova Scotia, but how it will be maintained has yet to be planned. Ann Dunsworth is preparing for the exchange this week.

Carol Morris reports that User Services answered 102 reference questions in December, down slightly from November due to holiday closures.

Frank Oram will soon be sending out the questionnaire for the 1992-93 Statistical report. Many copies of the latest "Directory of Nova Scotia Libraries" have been distributed. Remember that a WordPerfect version is available on disk, free of charge, by contacting Frank Oram or Judy Naugler. Funds are still available for purchasing materials for the Professional Collection so forward your requests to Frank Oram without delay!

Arlene Watts has been researching information on bulk purchasing, to find out how libraries may take advantage of the low prices for supplies, equipment, fuel, etc. that have been negotiated by the provincial government. This information will be forwarded to Chiefs as soon as possible.

User Services staff have enjoyed working with Robin Allen, a Library Technician student, who has been doing a work placement with us. She has been a big help in getting reference questions out quickly and we hope that she has gained some good experience working with us.

STUMPERS LIST

User Services staff have had some success using the STUMPERS listserv, available through E-mail on the Internet, to find answers to difficult reference questions. For example, we had a question about the author of a mystery series called "Seven deadly sins". We were unable to find any information on such a series through our sources so we posted the question to the STUMPERS list. Three

people replied that the series might be the one by Lawrence Sanders. It is set in New York City and features a police captain named "Iron Balls" Delaney. The titles range from "The first deadly sin" to "The fourth deadly sin" which is the latest. In another recent success story, a patron wanted a copy of a poem containing the line "old, old, old lady and the boy with the twisted knee" which may have been called "Boy who was half past three". We could not find anything like this in our usual sources so we turned to STUMPERS and got a reply from someone in Michigan who sent the title and full-text of this poem called "One, two, three".

You,too, can subscribe to STUMPERS either of the following ways:

1. Send a message with "SUBSCRIBE STUMPERS-L your full e-mail address" in the subject line to the following address :
MAILSERV@CRF.CUIS.EDU
2. Send an e-mail message asking the list moderator to subscribe you to the list. The address is:
ROSLIBREFRC@CRF.CUIS.EDU

If successful, you will receive confirmation from the server as well as a welcoming message containing information on how to subscribe and unsubscribe. For further information contact Carol Morris.

SAMPLE GST LETTER (see DON'T TAX READING....)

send to: all Liberal MP's in NS, and Prime Minister Jean Chretien

Dear :

I am writing to you to raise an issue which I believe is very important for the public library system in Nova Scotia. This issue is the need to remove the GST from reading materials.

The Liberal Party and approximately half of the Liberal caucus members endorsed the principle of a zero-rate on reading materials, during the federal election campaign. It was also the subject of a motion passed at the Liberal Party Conference in the summer of 1992, which reads,

"Whereas for the first time since Confederation the

Conservative government has placed a tax on magazines, books and newspapers;

Whereas this is the first time in 125 years that Canadians have had a tax on reading, on learning, and on knowledge;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a Liberal Government would reaffirm the historic principle embodied in tax free status for the printed word and remove the Goods and Services Tax on reading materials.

The Goods and Services Tax has had a devastating effect on library collections, limiting the variety and amount of information which Canadians can access at their libraries.

Thank you for sharing my concern over this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

Your name here

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That's it for this issue. Stay tuned . . . .

We encourage readers to comment on items found in THE DISSEMINATOR and/or make suggestions about content. These comments should be directed to Sue Dirani or Donna Bourne-Tyson. If you have any questions or comments about specific activities mentioned in this issue please contact the people involved.

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